

2008-11-08

Matthew 5:38, 39 *An Eye for an Eye*

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“Father in Heaven, we have been moved by beautiful music today, watching the children participating in offering, all these things. But Lord we are about to open Your Word, and we need You to be the One to teach us. We are praying that we would have an experience that can only be brought about by You. We pray that You will expand our minds and our hearts to receive the message You have for us. And we ask Heavenly Father that we will all hear exactly what You want us to hear. And we pray this in Jesus’ name, Amen.”

I have a poem, it’s by Roger Bullying, and Billie Ed Wheeler. And it became a song and was sung by Kenny Rogers. I’m not exactly sure what year he did this. It’s called “Cowered of the County.” “Everyone considered him the cowered of the county. He’d never stood one single time to prove the county wrong. His Mamma named him “Tommy,” the folks just called him “Yellow,” but something always told me they were reading Tommy wrong. He was only ten years old when his Daddy died in prison. I looked after Tommy ‘cause he was my brother’s son. I still recall the final words my brother said to Tommy: “Son, my life is over, but yours has just begun. Promise me son not to do the things I’ve done. Walk away from trouble if you can. It won’t mean you’re weak if you turn the other cheek. I hope you are old enough to understand. Son, you don’t have to fight to be a man.”

“There is someone for everyone, and Tommy’s love was Becky. In her arms he didn’t have to prove he was a man. One day, while he was working, the Gatlin boys came calling. They took turns at Becky, there was three of them. Tommy opened up the door and saw his Becky crying. The torn dress, the shattered look was more than he could stand. He reached above the fire place and took down his Daddy’s picture. As his tears fell on his Daddy’s face, he heard these words again. “Promise me son not to do the things I’ve done. Walk away from trouble if you can. It won’t mean you’re weak if you turn the other cheek. I hope you are old enough to understand. Son, you don’t have to fight to be a man.””

“The Gatlin boys just laughed at him when he walked into the bar room. One of them got up and met him half way across the floor. When Tommy turned around, they said, “Hey look, old Yellow’s leaving. But you could a heard a pin drop when Tommy stopped and locked the door. Twenty years of crawling was bottled up inside him. He wasn’t holding nothing back. He let them have it all. When Tommy left the bar room, not a Gatlin boy was standing. He said, “This one is for Becky” as he watched the last one fall. And I heard him say: “I promised you Dad not to do the things you’ve done. I walk away from trouble when I can. Now please don’t think I am weak. I didn’t turn the other cheek. And Papa, I sure hope you understand. Sometimes you got to fight when you are a man.””

What about it? Turning the other cheek? Very familiar phrase and a concept that is hotly debated; hotly debated by people who think you should turn the other cheek which is kind of a ‘oxymoron.’ If you really believe that you shouldn’t debate at all. And it’s fascinating to me that the pacifist I know are some of the most obnoxious individuals I’ve ever met when it comes to arguing their point. What does it mean in the Bible when Jesus says to turn the other cheek?

Well I want to tell you something that many of you have heard. Those of you who have been on the seven year journey with us. And that is that in the Bible many times a point is made. And then illustrations are given. And often what we do as Christians is we fail to get the point and we debate the illustrations.

Now that's what's happening in this passage. Jesus is making a point. And a part of the illustration is turning the other cheek. But we argue the illustration and we miss the point, and consequently don't benefit from its teaching. So let's see what Jesus is trying to say here. And we'll find the passage in Matthew 5 verses 38 and 39. Jesus says, "You have heard that it was said, *an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth*, but I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on the right cheek, turn the other to him also."

Well as you know for us to understand what to do with this passage, the number one rule is, we have to look at it in its context. We have to seek to understand what it meant to the people who heard it originally? What is going on in their lives that Jesus said this? And once we can discern that, then we make the application to our life. We don't want to read our life into the Scriptures. We want to understand the Scriptures and then apply them to our life. So what does Jesus mean, "You have heard that it was said, *an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth*?" What is Jesus referring to? Let's look at that.

Let's turn first to Exodus chapter 21 and we'll be looking at verses 22-25. Verse 22: "If men fight and hurt a woman with child so that she gives birth prematurely, yet no lasting harm follows, he shall surely be punished accordingly as the woman's husband imposes on him. And he shall pay as the judges determine." If there is a struggle, two men are fighting and they hurt a woman that is pregnant. And she gives birth prematurely, and the baby is not harmed. Still, the man will have some punishment according to the woman's husband. But, the woman's husband must submit it to the judges. The judges determine what that would be. Do you see that?

We go on. "But if any lasting harm follows, then you shall give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe." And you read this and you say, "Oh man, this is a barbaric code!" No it's not. It is pure justice! You see, back in the day when this was written, men had problems with their hearts. And the problem they had with their hearts was this: if somebody did something to them, and let's say they did it at the level two, the natural heart would want to respond at a level five. But Jesus says, "No! Retaliation or justice requires only what was given out." If you were offended at the level two, you only get to offend at the level two. But you don't get to do it, the judge must determine that.

And so what this was was a system set up by God for His people. A system of justice! I'll tell you brothers and sisters as we study this today think of it in the context of our court system today. And you'll probably conclude there would be a lot safer society today if this were a practice in our court system. Well let's read on. Let's go to Leviticus 24 verse 17. Here clearly, in verse 17 it says, "Whoever kills any man shall surely be put to death." Now if you have a concern, an

interest in capital punishment, here is a text you can use. The Bible is clear. “Anyone who kills a man shall be put to death.”

Verse 18: “Whoever kills an animal shall make it good. An animal for animal! If a man causes disfigurement of his neighbor, as he has done so shall it be done to him. Fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth. As he has caused disfigurement of a man, so shall it be done to him. And whoever kills an animal shall restore it, and whoever kills a man shall be put to death. You shall have the same law for the stranger and for one from your own country for I am the Lord your God.” God said this. It’s His law. And He says, “It’s the law of the land.” So much so that if someone is a stranger in your land, they are subject to this law as well!

So it has nothing to do with tribes, has nothing to do with being of the seed of Abraham, has nothing to do with that. This is the law of the land. So we’ve had judges, we have the law, and we are told that this is how it was supposed to function, how it was supposed to operate. Look at Deuteronomy 19. Now we have seen that if somebody took the eye of another individual, in court, they would be required to lose their own eye. Well here is what actually happened. It didn’t take long before the people recognized, you know, that’s kind of hard to do. How do you disfigure somebody the same disfigurement that the other person has? And what if I take the right eye out of somebody, and so, they require me to take my right eye out, but I can’t even see out of my right eye anyways. So is that really equal?

And so it became an ethical dilemma which they saw this way and that was remuneration. So people would go to court and they would say, “Well that eye is worth an x amount of money and that’s what you are required to pay.” It would be similar to what we see when people sue for damages. So that’s kind of how it worked out. So it wasn’t that they would actually lose a hand or an eye or something like this, but they would have to pay what the court determined to be of equal value for that. But what about if it wasn’t a physical thing? What about if it was just somebody lying about you and wanting to do harm to you that way?

Look at Deuteronomy 19 and we’ll begin with verse 15: “One witness shall not rise against a man concerning any iniquity or any sin that he commits.” So if one of you sees another person doing a sin, if we were living back in those days, your testimony would not be good enough. You can’t condemn a person on one witness. It goes on to say, “...by the mouth of two or three witnesses the matter shall be established.” Now what about a false witness? Verse 16, “If a false witness rises against any man to testify against him of wrongdoing, then both men in the controversy shall stand before the Lord, before the priests and judges who serve in those days.”

Okay, so here is a man and here is another man. And this man is claiming that this man did something. And it’s a lie, it’s a false witness. This man who is the innocent man can bring the false witness there to go to court. They are to go to judges, they are to go to the priests, whoever is ruling at that time, and they are to present their case there. Now notice what happens. “Then...” okay, verse 18: “And the judges shall make careful inquiry, and indeed, if the witness is a false witness, who has testified falsely against his brother, then you shall do to him

as he thought to have done to his brother; so you shall put away the evil person from among you.”

So you see what’s happening? If somebody is a false witness, and the person they are testifying against, or trying to get in trouble; they say “This guy did this” and “This is ought to happen to him.” When that goes to court and if it’s found out that that it was a false witness, a lie that was doing that, the very thing that the false witness wanted to happen to that other person is what’s going to happen to them. Are you beginning to see some of the wisdom of this system? But it goes on, verse 20: “And those who remain shall hear and fear, and hereafter they shall not again commit such evil among you. Your eye shall not pity; but life shall be for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.”

So we have a system: priests, judges, civil law, witnesses, court, law, is same for strangers as it is for the people who live there. We are talking about civil authority, protecting the public, punishing of offenders, deterrence to crime. But, notice this, it is not administered by the individual. It is taken to court. It is dealt with by a larger group, by officials, okay? In fact, the Bible in the Old Testament is against personal vengeance. Look at Leviticus 19 verse 18. Here again, Moses is quoting God: “You shall not take vengeance nor bear any grudge against the children of your people. But you shall love your neighbor as yourself, I am the Lord.”

We are not take personal vengeance nor to hold a grudge. Look at Proverbs 20 verse 22, it is reiterated there by Solomon. In Proverbs 20 verse 22 it says: “Do not say, ‘I will recompense evil. Wait for the Lord, and He will save.’ So don’t say, “I am going to take care of this.” That’s not the way it was set up. It was to go to court, if you will. But what about the New Testament? Look at Romans 12, verses 17 through 19. Here Paul weighs in on the issue. He says, “Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the side of all men. If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. Beloved ...” here it is, “... do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath. For it is written, *vengeance is Mine, I will repay*, says the Lord.”

And we’ll not turn there, but if you want it in your notes, First Thessalonians 5 verse 15 says, “Do not render evil for evil.” So the Bible is very consistent. God had a law, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, justice! And if somebody is abridged by another individual, they were to take their case to court. And in court, it would be considered what was fair, and the process worked that way. Man was not supposed to take personal vengeance. Now let’s go back to Matthew 5 and see what is happening here. In Matthew 5, of all the things on Planet Earth that Jesus could address, why does He talk about turning the other cheek, and/or this eye for eye, tooth for tooth thing? Well remember, this is in the context. And in Matthew 5 verse 38, when He says, “You have heard that it was said *an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth*, but I tell you...” what’s He talking about?

Go back to Matthew 5 verse 20. “I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the Kingdom of Heaven.” Then we discussed their concept of murder. Then we discussed their concept of

adultery. Then we discussed their concept of divorce. Then we discussed their concept of oaths. Now we are discussing their concept of retaliation. Jesus is talking about religious leaders who are abusing a system that should have brought justice. Here is how they are doing it. Personal vengeance and they are using the name of God to do it.

Now I tell you, there is probably nothing on earth that is more despicable, then somebody in church, claiming to be acting for God when they are acting like a devil. You know you take people who say that this floral arrangement here, that is right. That's the right doctrine, that's the right behavior, that's the way we should eat, that's the way we should dress, that's the way we should act, so forth and so on. And here is another person over here who maybe questioning that. I have seen people thinking they are right; act like a demon, in-persecuting the person who has questions.

Now I tell you brothers and sisters, it's a serious issue, because in the name of religion many people have been hurt. In the name of religion, claiming "God is on our side," people have used it as an excuse to take personal vengeance on other people. And that's what the scribes and Pharisees were doing. And Jesus said, "That's not right. You can't go to heaven and do that. That is not going to work in the Kingdom of God." He goes on to say in verse 39, this is fascinating: "But I tell you not to resist an evil person." Now, if you read the Greek or have access to reading the Greek, you'll have an interesting discovery. Almost every Bible you'll read will say, "an evil person" or "an evil man."

But read it in the Greek. Do you want to know what it says? Evil! That's it. "Penorio!" Evil! That's it! It doesn't say evil man, it doesn't say evil principle, it doesn't say anything. It just says "Evil!" Man has been added to smooth it out. And it makes some sense. It does make sense. But let me ask you this. How many of you sincerely believe, a Christian, a God fearing individual should not resist evil? Nobody believes that. In fact, let's look what the Bible says about it? Turn to James 4 verses 7 and 8. It says, "Therefore submit to God, resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands you sinners and purify your hearts you double minded."

We are to resist evil. We are to resist the devil. No question about it. What about each other? Are we ever to resist one another? What does it mean to resist? It means to stand up against. It actually, in reality, in the Greek it means "to stand in battle array." I am ready to do battle. Are we ever supposed to that with another human being? Well, let's see what the Bible says. Look at Galatians chapter 2, the church is in a crisis there. Paul has gone through the region of Galatia, he's brought many Gentiles to Jesus Christ and they are serving Him as their Savior. Behind him the Jews have come in, they said, "Now you have to be circumcised, and you have to do this, and you have to do that..." In another words, they are making them Jewish.

And then, another wave of Jews came in and they said, "You know, Jewish people cannot really fellowship with non Jews," and so the fellowship dinners were this way. Okay, Jews on this side, Gentiles on this side. They couldn't even fellowship together anymore. You can only imagine what would happen to a young church. It's going to be destroyed. Paul is mad! Verse 11: "But

when Peter came to Antioch, I withstood him to his face because he was to be blamed.” So in public, face to face, Paul says, “It’s your fault Peter!” And he really dressed him down. Did Paul ever repent of that? No, he didn’t have to. What he did was right. He was holding Peter accountable for the mess that he had created. But I am telling you, Paul was not seeking personal vengeance. That’s what Jesus is addressing. Jesus is talking about personal vengeance. You are not to seek personal vengeance. You turn the other cheek. That’s the illustration.

But what does it mean to turn the other cheek? Well, let me share that with you. What cheek is it you are supposed to turn? That’s if you are hit on the right cheek, right? You are supposed to turn the other cheek. Now, I need somebody to help me with an illustration here. Who is willing? Jeff, are you willing? Thank you. You won’t remember a thing. Jeff, I want you to face the congregation. This is his right cheek. How many of you are right handed? How many of you are left handed? Only a few left handed people. They think they are better than us. (Laughter) Here is what happened in Jewish culture. Most of the people there were just like us, right handed. If I hit Jeff with my right hand, I am going to hit him in his left cheek, or dead-on. If I slap him with my right hand, I definitely am going to hit him in his left cheek.

Jesus says, “If you are hit in your right cheek, turn the other one.” What does that mean? To hit him in the right cheek, I’m going to have to back hand him. Do you see that? It actually hurt my finger on my wedding ring. Yes, you have to back hand. And to a Jewish man, that’s a gesture of utter disrespect. “You are nothing. You are despicable.” It’s an insult, not a physical assault. Thanks Jeff. Give him a hand, he did good. So Jesus is not talking about defending ourselves from a physical assault. He is talking about seeking personal vengeance when we’ve been insulted. Do you see the difference? There is a huge difference because I know some people who think Christianity is: “Go ahead, hit me again, I don’t know why but Jesus says do it.” “I don’t have any rights. I gave up my rights when I became a Christian.” “Oh Jesus please come, this is miserable.”

And we become a spineless, disrespectful to ourselves and disrespectful to God type of people. God has given us dignity and self respect. And when we become a Christian in Christ, we are to walk as we are a King, “Walk with the dignity of a King” I should say, “but with humility of a servant.” People aren’t supposed to abuse us and take advantage of us. We are not helping the cause of God one bit. We are actually being contrary to the Scriptures. Well I know that some of you are saying, “Pastor come on, help us with this though, because we’ve heard so much about turning the other cheek and what it means and what it doesn’t mean, and we want some help here.”

All right, I’ll help you on one condition. You remember the issue is personal vengeance. The illustration is an insult. Okay? But we’ll deal with it as a physical assault if you will. And again, I’ll remind you pacifists, I don’t want to hear from you. ‘Cause if you really believe, then you just have to sit and take it. What about Jesus? Jesus in John 18 gets slapped in the cheek, what does He do? Let’s turn there. In John 18 Jesus is at His trial. It’s early, early Friday morning; He’s going to die that day on Calvary for us. And we come to verse 22 and it says, “And when He...” that’s Jesus, “...has said these things, one of the officers who stood by struck Jesus with the

palm of his hand saying, 'Do you answer the High Priest like that?'" So he slapped with the palm of the hand, not with the back of the hand, but nonetheless, he slapped. But if Jesus is going to be consistent with His own teachings, He would naturally just bear the other cheek and say, "Hit the other one too." He doesn't.

"Jesus answered and said, "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil, but if well, why do you strike Me?" He calls the man to accountability. He didn't silently, quietly just turn the other cheek. And then, let's be honest folks, what is Jesus doing on this day? He is dying! And He's promised His Father, He will not resist the death. All hell is being poured out on Him, and He is going to take it. He could have stopped it any moment He wanted to, but He is going to take it! They can slap Him, they can whip Him, they can pull the beard out of His face, they can spit on Him, they can harass Him, do all that, He is allowing it to happen because He is the Lamb brought to the slaughter. He is doing that for us!

And I'll tell you, if you want to use Him as example in this situation, He was headed for His death, and you might be too if you are refusing to defend yourself. The question is did Jesus ever, anywhere defend Himself? Because in this point, we know He has chosen to die. Well the answer is yes. He does defend Himself. Look at Luke chapter 4. This is a powerful scene. In Luke chapter 4 Jesus has been preaching to the home town crowd of Nazareth, in the local Synagogue there. And they are upset with what He said. We don't have time to go into why they are upset, but they are so mad, they are going to seek to take His life. Look at verse 29. "They rose up, thrust Him out of the city..." Now they thrust Him out of the city! That's even fun to say. Thrust Him out of the city, they are throwing Him.

"...And they led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built, that they might throw Him down over the cliff." What does that mean? They want to kill Him! What does He do? "Then passing through the midst of them, He wet His way." Do you know how He did that? He defended Himself. Now the Bible doesn't say how, I suspect if He taekwondo'd the whole crowd, we'd hear about it. You know, if He is kicking them, and going, hoo, hoo, ha, ha, we'd hear about that. We would hear about that. One thing is clear, He said this. "Not one stone is going to touch Me, get your hands off me, I am not dying today." And He walked away. He defended Himself, He stopped it from happening.

Do you see that? He stopped it from happening, okay? So, "You are not going to touch me today," He said. Now, if you do have a problem with defending yourself, you should really give careful study to Jesus defending Himself there. But what about rights when we are insulated because that's really when we want to get personal vengeance! You know, somebody insults me. What are we supposed to do? We are just supposed to take it? You know, you are a Christian. That's the way it goes. "Too bad, it comes with the territory. When you sign on with Jesus, you just take insults. That's the way it is. Oh, Jesus, please come quick. There is a time of trouble upon me."

Is that what we are supposed to do? I'll tell you brothers and sisters that is not Biblical. It is not Biblical. You are to hold people accountable. Look at Matthew 18 verse 15; this is how it's

supposed to work, especially in the church. “Moreover, if you brothers sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother.” If somebody is lying about you, if somebody is saying things that are mean and wrong and they are really wrecking you character over the coal, you go talk to them alone. Why? Because you are trying to win your brother! That’s Christianity! Christianity is trying to win somebody, but it also is holding that person accountable for what they are saying.

You see, to walk up to somebody and say, “I’ve heard you saying some things about me,” is not sinful, it is loving. It’s holding them accountable for what they are doing, and for the purpose of trying to work through it, if I walk up to them and said, “I’ve heard you are saying things about me,” and then pop them in the face, that’s personal vengeance. It’s not going to work. God is not happy with that. If I say, “I hear you saying some things about me; wait until I get done with saying things about you.” It’s not going to work, personal vengeance, right? But if I go and my attitude is, “Can we work this out and be brothers?” If the guy refuses it’s not over. Verse 16, hey listen, I am telling you, God is not going to let people off the hook. We ought not either.

It goes on, “But if he will not hear you, take with you one or two more that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.” Here we go. “And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be like a heathen and a tax collector.” So somebody is out there and they are spewing forth venom, and just sewage about another individual. And that individual goes to them and seeks to become a brother with them. And if that person refuses, you take two or three other people with you. And still if they refuse, you take it to the whole church. And if the guy won’t listen to the church, he is not worthy to be in the church. He is out. That’s how it works. But it’s never to be personal vengeance. That’s what Jesus is against, personal vengeance.

What about your rights as a citizen? Do we give up our rights as a citizen, just turn the other cheek? Driving down the road, somebody crashes into my car, jumps out and says, “Hey it was your fault.” “It wasn’t my fault, you did it.” “No it was your fault, I am taking you to court. I am going to sue you for a million dollars.” “Okay. Jesus come quick!” What are we supposed to do? Is it wrong to go to court? You know, Paul was upset with the people who were going to court because they were going to court over issues they could have settled among themselves. But is it wrong to go to court as a Christian, or are we just supposed to take it? “Sorry, that’s what you get, that’s what you signed on for. There will be heaven some day, and it will be all right.” I am telling you, that is not the scriptures in the Bible.

Look at Acts 22, experience of Paul; Acts chapter 22 verse 24. He’s just been arrested, and they are going to scourge him which means, they are going to whip him. In verse 24 it says, “The commander order him,” that’s Paul, “to be brought into the barracks, and said that he should be examined under scourging so that he might know why they shouted so against him. And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said to the centurion who stood by, “Is it lawful for you to scourge a man who is a Roman, and uncondemned?” When the centurion heard that, he went and told the commander, saying, “Take care what you do, for this man is a Roman.” Then the

commander came and said to him, "Tell me, are you a Roman?" He said, "Yes." And they stopped. Why? Because Paul had rights as a Roman citizen, and he used them right there.

You have rights as a citizen, and you ought not to be afraid to use those rights. It's wrong when you use those rights for personal vengeance, but it's not wrong when you are seeking justice. But what about this one, what if the church is wrong? You just take it? Or do you have a right to appeal. Well, I can only show you what the Bible teaches. Look at Acts 25 verses 11 and 12. Paul is on trial and this time the religious leaders have him on trial, but it's in front of the Roman magistrate, and it says here in verse 11: "...for if I am an offender, or have committed anything worthy of death, I do not object to dying. But if there is nothing in these things of which these men accuse me, no one can deliver me to them, I appeal to Caesar." Then Festus, when he had conferred with the council, answered, "You have appealed to Caesar? To Caesar you shall go!"

Turn the other cheek? That is dealing with insults, and not seeking personal vengeance when somebody insults you. But the Bible clearly lays out that you are to talk to that person, hold them accountable for what they are saying. Do you see how it's all balanced? Now let me share with you the biggest danger regarding personal vengeance. The biggest danger is in our marriages, in our relationships. She doesn't do what he expects her to do, so he is going to punish her. How? Well, he may beat her, or he may just ignore her. Someway, somehow he is going to punish her. He doesn't do what she expects him to do, so she is going to punish him. How? Is she going to beat him, maybe? There are some women that can do that. She'll find a way, she'll punish him.

I am telling you brothers and sisters, personal vengeance is a huge issue. And for most of us, we have completely not even seen it in the passage, and we jump into the debate about whether we should turn the other cheek and what that means. But personal vengeance could mean the difference in a successful marriage. Personal vengeance can mean the difference of going to heaven or not. And the only way, the only way we will not seek personal vengeance is when Christ dwells in our heart. It's the only way. Because without Christ, we are going to be all about personal vengeance and our lives will be a trail of tears of broken relationships.

So today, it's a very simple issue that lies before us. Do we want Jesus in our heart? If we want Jesus in our heart, He is willing to come. "I promised you Dad, not to do the things you've done. I walk away from trouble when I can. Now please don't think I am weak. I didn't turn the other cheek and Papa, I sure hope you understand. Sometimes you got to fight when you are a man." Men and women, resist evil. Fight, but fight the good fight. Fight the fight of faith. Fight to keep Jesus in your sight! Fight to keep Jesus in your heart. Fight to keep personal vengeance off to the side! Fight to love as God would want us to love!

Sometimes, you will have to fight literally to protect yourself, your family, your property. Sometimes you will have to go to court. Sometimes you will have to bring somebody to the church. You may have to do that. It's all part of God's plan. The main thing is, do you have Jesus in your heart? If he is not there, doesn't matter what your fights are. You have lost already. You

put Christ in your heart, He'll take personal vengeance out, and you will be the very person God wants you to be.

So today, if there is anyone here who wants to say to God the Father, "I want Your son Jesus in my heart," I am going to ask you to stand. "Father in Heaven, we pray, and we ask Jesus to come into our hearts. We ask for Him to dwell within us, and to replace personal vengeance with love. And we ask this in Jesus name, Amen."